

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Governor presents Annie Jeffrey Volunteers with Points of Light award for community service**

**Lincoln, Neb.** – You should meet the AJ Volunteers! They are an energetic group of women who give their time, talent and energy to help Polk County Nebraska build a stronger community. The all-volunteer group received the Governor's Points of Light group award from Governor Dave Heineman and First Lady Sally Ganem on Wednesday, November 13, 2013 in a ceremony at the State Capitol in Lincoln.

On September 22, 1994, a group of women met at Annie Jeffrey Health Center to organize what is now known as the Annie Jeffrey Volunteers. They came up with the idea of raising money for the hospital by opening a thrift shop, so on November 15, 1995, the Thrift Shop opened at its present location, 451 Hawkeye in Osceola, Nebraska. Currently, there are approximately 60 volunteers, with most of them working at least once or twice a month, volunteering 900 hours a year.

Joe Lohrman, CEO of Annie Jeffrey Memorial County Health Center said, "The AJ Volunteers always have a smile and kind word for anyone that may venture in to the thrift shop. They do a great business and over the past 19 years have been able to donate almost \$100,000 to the Health Center for the purchase of much needed equipment. That alone is an amazing feat considering most of the items in the shop sell for pennies on the dollar!"

The AJ Volunteers Board of Directors meet monthly to learn of hospital volunteer opportunities, update the Thrift Shop schedule, authorize purchases for the hospital, and donate excess merchandise to other organizations. They are a dependable and active retailer involved in all community events.

The group actively recruits new members from local churches, senior centers and newly retired individuals. The collaboration between the hospital, local businesses, City of Osceola, Polk County and the area churches have encouraged those who have never volunteered to join the AJ Volunteers and enjoy the gratification that comes from community service and volunteering.

The Governor's Points of Light awards are sponsored by ServeNebraska and presented quarterly in recognition of volunteers who give their time, talent and energy to help Nebraskans build stronger communities. To nominate a youth, adult or group for a Governor's Points of Light Award who have made a difference through volunteerism and community service, visit the ServeNebraska website at [www.serve.nebraska.gov](http://www.serve.nebraska.gov). The next nomination deadline is December 15, 2013.

ServeNebraska pursues its mission of mobilizing Nebraskans to strengthen their communities through volunteering, collaboration and national service programs.

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